

For Immediate Release

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ERASE DOUBT Kicks Off World AIDS Day with LA County-Wide Casting Call

LOS ANGELES, California – December 1, 2010 – The LA County Office of AIDS Programs and Policy (OAPP) announces today its launch of a county-wide casting call for the faces of the 2011 Erase Doubt advertising campaign aimed to fight the spread of HIV and AIDS in Los Angeles County.

Beginning today through January 9, 2011, individuals living in LA County are welcome to submit headshots of themselves by visiting www.EraseDoubt.org. A judging committee will select the top 10 models to be featured in the multi-media advertising campaign launching March 2011. The winners will also serve as campaign ambassadors helping to drive word of mouth of HIV testing and AIDS awareness.

The final 10 models will be announced by OAPP on January 14, 2011.

OAPP is a program office of the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health directing the overall response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Los Angeles County. OAPP has released staggering statistics including:

- 70% of **women living with AIDS** in Los Angeles County got HIV through heterosexual contact.
- Just over half of all new sexually transmitted HIV infections are spread by people who **have it and don't know it**.
- 7 out of 10 people living with HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles County are **gay or bisexual men**.
- **African-Americans** make up 9.8% of Los Angeles County's population, but account for 22% of living HIV/AIDS cases.
- **Latinos** make up the largest number of people living with AIDS of any racial and ethnic group in Los Angeles County.
- You are up to **5 times more likely** to get HIV if you already have an STD.

"We are excited to promote World AIDS Day by launching our search for individuals to partner with us in the effort to eliminate HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles County," says Mario J. Pérez, Director of the LA County Office of AIDS Programs and Policy. "The Erase Doubt campaign strives to draw attention to these statistics and increase HIV testing among those at high-risk of being infected; and to build awareness about the availability of free care and treatment for those living with HIV."

To learn more about how to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS, or for information on care and treatment go to: www.EraseDoubt.org.

About Erase Doubt

Erase Doubt is funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the California State Office of AIDS and the County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Health, Office of AIDS Programs and Policy. The initiative was created to increase HIV testing in LA County, drive awareness of HIV prevention, and provide information about HIV/AIDS treatment and care. The EraseDoubt.org web site was developed as an online resource center for Los Angeles County residents at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and/or living with HIV/AIDS. For more information, call 800-367-AIDS (2437), email info@erasedoubt.org, or consult your health care provider.

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